

practice, which cannot be too much reprov'd, of making two heights of windows look like one, as in some modern Gothic designs. In a great majority of houses, other causes than bad taste have operated against beauty. A justifiable economy has no doubt had its share. How great an obstacle to the progress of architectural beauty the window tax has been, I need not say. Among the effects of economy in ordinary street architecture, is the patchy appearance caused by the use of the common detached stone head and sill. In every respectable brick building, an architrave or window jamb of some kind should be used to unite, and thus make the window a whole.

Welcome now to the filling up, or sash part, and here is the great defect of our windows: I am referring, as I have done all along, to erections of the classic style. Architecture is defined "the art of the beautiful in architecture;" its beauty of form is a language by which to express the ideas of the architect, and awaken a definite emotion in the breast of the spectator, in harmony with the use and object of the building. None is thus to be fraught with meaning, and pregnant with sentiment; but here, in the matter of the window, comes a void, an expressionless mass, a hiatus in the composition, and this, too, in a part where expression and beauty were most to be expected. The window is to the façade what the eye (the window of the soul) is to the human countenance,—the most significant member,—the one from which the genius of the building, if I may so speak, should look out, and which should reflect, more than any other, the thought of the designer. There is analogy between architecture and poetry as between all the fine arts, and windows may be compared to the beautiful passages of a poem, those out of which the pure spirit of the poet, as said by Goethe, looks forth through open sparkling eyes. Let us see in what manner this importance is met: our window dressings boast their origin from the highest sources of decoration, but what is the window itself,—the window proper? The slightest glance will show that decoration of the latter is seldom if ever attempted. Within the architrave jambs of the window generally, design has not entered. Casting the eye over the windows of our churches and chapels, palaces and mansions, club-houses, courts of law, and halls of commerce, what do we find? The graces of architectural proportion and decorative expression are perchance lavished around; but within, a few equidistant cross-bars receive the glass, and enclose the opening. I refer to the vertically-sliding sash, used, not only in our humbler dwellings, but most commonly introduced into buildings where architectural decoration and character are aimed at; and I maintain that its employment, particularly in the latter class of edifices, is a solecism. If remarks before made be correct, it is evident, that the filling up a sash of a window is a matter of sufficient importance not only to call for thought and design along with the rest, but to demand peculiar care in its treatment, that it should be carefully wrought into harmony with the general design, and receive a beauty of detail and delicacy of finish corresponding with its intended expression. Its subdivisions, either, by agreeable form, should give pleasure to the eye, and satisfy its desire of beauty, or be made so small as to look like texture, rich or delicate as the general character of the building may dictate. Now instead of this being done, the common sash bars, as generally disposed, are a rude harsh interruption to the general effect, an infection upon the eye. I have witnessed their introduction into important buildings, and the effect is invariably to break at once all charm created by the surrounding architecture: they destroy breadth and harmony of effect, and confuse or contradict all contemplated expression. Many are the animadversions that have from time to time been passed upon windows: their decoration, form, relief, arrangement, and the rest, have been at different times found fault with, but it is in this matter of filling up that we are most deficient. Here is literally the widest field for improvement.*

S. H.

AN IRON LIGHTHOUSE has just been finished at Birmingham for Middleton Point, Saugey Island, India.

FALL OF GALLERY AT RHUDDLAN CASTLE.

THE Welsh Bardic meeting at Rhuddlan Castle, known as the Eisteddod, was marred by the fall, on the 26th of September, of one of the temporary galleries, erected for the reception of spectators, by which several persons were seriously injured, but, miraculously, no life was lost. A special committee appointed to investigate the cause of the accident said,— "We attribute the accident entirely to the defective and unworkmanlike manner in which the timbers are put together at the west end of the castle, most of the supporters upon which the whole fabric rested being in several pieces, and not protected by braces or hold-fasts. Owing to these imperfections the superstructure was not sufficiently able to resist the oscillations, which must have been anticipated, from the applause that followed the performance of the first female candidate on the triple harp. We consider that such a palpable imperfection ought not to have existed, and that the conduct of the builder, or contractor, and also that of the other persons whose duty it was to receive the work from the contractor's hands and to report upon its efficiency, have been highly reprehensible. With regard to the culpable conduct of the builder in particular, we are unable to find words to express our censure and indignation."

Neither Mr. O. Jones, the architect (known there as *Talhamara*), nor Mr. Evans, of Bangor, the contractor for the building, were present when the accident happened, but arrived soon after. The gallery was reinstated, and other portions of the structure strengthened.

At the close of the festival the architect came forward and expressed a wish that another architect should examine the building at his expense, and report whether the blame of the late accident rested with him or with the contractor.

The committee immediately appointed a person to survey the building, but we have not heard the result.

THINGS OF THE PAST.

A VERY curious discovery has been made in the mosque of St. Sophia, at Constantinople. In the course of cleansing and repairing the interior, the original decorations in mosaic have been brought to light, including, as we understand, a portrait of Constantine. Drawings have been made, and, as we believe, on their way to England. The Sultan, to prevent the necessity of removing them, as their religion would require, has considerably ordered them to be covered up again.

Last week a Roman tessellated pavement was discovered at a locality called the Churchyard, Holcombe Farm, two miles from Lyme, and a little distance from Musbury Castle, a celebrated and very fine earthwork east of the valley of the Axe. The villa at this spot must have been a Roman station. The fact of this interesting discovery had hardly become known to the neighbourhood, when a determination to cover up the pavement was resolved upon by the owner of the estate, which was done on Saturday last week.

At Lyme, Kent, the "British Pompeii," as it has been termed, although at present this title would raise false expectations in the minds of visitors, the works are going on slowly: funds are needed.

We learn from the Bristol papers that in the course of alterations now being made in the premises, 56, Wine-street, the workmen have discovered, imbedded in the walls, and at a distance of about 15 feet from each other, two ancient pillars, which, it is evident, from their formation, at one time belonged to some public building, probably the corn-market, which in early times is understood to have been held near Wine-street.

Near Fontenay in France, between Soissons and Compiègne, foundations of Roman buildings have been found, covering a surface of more than 34,000 metres, and divided into more than 200 rooms or cells.

According to the *Literary Gazette*, Mr. Layard has discovered a statue in the pyramid at Nimroud. It is from four to five feet in height, in gypseum, elaborately carved, and very perfect.

There is also a high relief of the King, very beautifully executed, standing in an arch eight feet high, and covered with minute inscriptions. Mr. Layard's last communication is dated Akra, July 17, where, we are sorry to say, he had been confined by a severe attack of fever. The inefficient assistance he has received has caused him to over-exert himself, and thus he has been stopped for awhile on his way to Van to secure inscriptions. The very important discoveries he is now making render it imperatively necessary that his exertions should not be stayed for want of funds.

A few days ago the *Brigantine Apprentice* arrived in the St. Katharine Docks from Bussorah, having on board a great quantity of Assyrian and other antiquities and marbles, consigned to the trustees of the British Museum. Among them are the great bull from Nineveh, with a man's head and dragon's wings, weighing 12 tons, and a lion, sculptured in the same manner, weighing 9 tons. There are also several coffins, containing many curious relics of the manners and usages of Eastern countries regarding the ceremonies observed in burying their dead.

A letter from an American lady, to the *New York Literary World*, says,— "A new discovery has just been made at Heliopolis, in Egypt. Some of the felahs, in digging for earth to use in the gardens which cover the remains of that once glorious city, came upon two stone pillars, so placed as to give the impression that they formed a side door or entrance, perhaps of a temple. The hieroglyphics are finely cut, and in excellent preservation; and the cartouch bears the name of Thothmes III., in whose reign, according to Wilkinson, the Exodus took place in c. 1491. There was found also a part of a wall, each brick of which bore the same cartouch."

VENTILATION OF THE COURTS OF WESTMINSTER BY THE STEAM JET.

In your paper of last week, in an article headed "Protection of New Inventions from Piracy," you say, "the Courts of Exchequer and Common Pleas at Westminster are to be ventilated under an infringement of a patent for ventilating by steam, taken out by a poor man now dead, on the 7th of May, 1844." As the courts in question are about to be ventilated by an arrangement recommended by me, I presume it may be inferred that the alleged infringement is on my part. You will, therefore, possibly do me the favour to put your readers, who may have read this statement and are unacquainted with the subject, in possession of the following facts, which will enable them to judge how far any one was justified in taking out a patent in 1844? It may be seen, by abundance of published documents in the blue books, and other authorities, that I introduced the steam jet as a motive power for producing currents of air, so long ago as 1825 (see evidence before a committee in the House of Lords, 1819; that, in 1827, I introduced it in steam-carriages on common roads; that in virtue of its action I was enabled to drive a steam-carriage on the turnpike-road from London to Bath, and from Bath back again to London, averaging a rate of fourteen miles per hour. (See Report of the House of Commons, 1822.) The steam jet was then publicly introduced, and the public were carried by its agency to and from Gloucester and Cheltenham every day for four months consecutively, when any one might have seen it in action. At this period railways were establishing: the Stockton and Darlington Railway was opened and worked by locomotive engines; their utmost speed was nine miles per hour for passenger traffic. I recommended the steam jet to the late Mr. Stephenson, to increase their speed: who thought, he said, "it might increase their rate to fourteen miles per hour." He applied it to a locomotive engine at the opening of the Manchester and Liverpool Railway, and its speed was immediately increased from nine to thirty miles per hour. By recent improvements, the speed has been increased on the Great Western Railway to seventy; and I believe, in one instance, a rate of 120 miles per hour has been maintained. At this time it was applied to ventilate the Ophthalmic Hospital (see report of Lords and Commons on the New Palace). In 1835 I recommended it for the ventilation of coal-mines: my evidence is very full on this application, and is published in "The Report of the Committee of the House of Commons, 1835, on Accidents in Mines." See para. 3867. I was fully reported by the South Shields Committee in 1839; and plans and sectional drawings published in their report. (See South Shields report on accidents in mines.) I recommended